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GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

United States Senate

September 15, 2010

Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

I write today on behalf of millions of law-abiding American gun owners, many of whom are concerned by a State Department decision to deny South Korea's proposed sale of surplus M1 Carbines and M1 Garand rifles to qualified U.S. buyers

From defeating Hitler in World War II to America's involvement in Korea and Vietnam, these American-made firearms played a very critical role in the history of the 20th century. They will always be valued as collector's items. And because they are firearms, our right to buy, keep, collect and sell them to qualified buyers is protected under the Second Amendment of our Constitution.

I am specifically concerned by the State Department's reasons for denying South Korea's request to sell these firearms to qualified American buyers. According to one news report, a Department spokesman said the guns "could potentially be exploited by individuals seeking firearms for illicit purposes." The spokesman reportedly added that the administration is "exploring alternative options to dispose of these firearms."

This doesn't add up in my book. I count myself among many gun rights advocates who fundamentally disagree with the State Department's reasoning. Rejecting the responsible sale of legal firearms over hypothetical concerns that they could be used for "illicit purposes" sets a dangerous precedent and it is contrary to the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans.

I also encourage the administration to not "dispose" of M1 Carbines and M1 Garand rifles, and instead continue to work with the government of South Korea to find a responsible way to deliver these firearms to qualified and willing buyers in the U.S. market through the non-profit Civilian Marksmanship Program.

I respectfully ask that you reconsider your decision, and look forward to hearing your response in the near future.

Very Respectfully,



Jon Tester
United States Senator